



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service



News Release

Cooperating with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture
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Upcoming survey information is contained in this release.
You can also find it on our site at www.nass.usda.gov/pa/ and
click on the Pennsylvania Publications link.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

USDA To Interview Certified Organic Growers

HARRISBURG, PA, Mar 19, 2012 - - Under a cooperative agreement with USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA), NASS will conduct the 2011 USDA Certified Organic Production Survey to gather detailed production and marketing information on certified organic farming in the United States. The information published as a result of the survey will be used by RMA **to improve Federal crop insurance programs for organic crops, as required by the 2008 Farm Bill. The data will help determine the numbers and varieties of organic crops insured and develop new insurance approaches.**

This survey provides certified organic producers an opportunity to showcase their contributions to U.S. agriculture and help ensure the continued growth and sustainability of organic farming in the United States. From the 2008 Organic Production Survey, NASS reported the average production expenditures are higher for organic farms (\$171,978) than for all farms nationwide (\$109,359). Knowing the disparity in cost of production, this new information will help the USDA re-evaluate Federal crop insurance programs to ensure USDA certified organic producers receive equitable insurance rates and programs for the food and fiber they produce.

Besides RMA, USDA's Natural Resources and Conservation Service will use the detailed data on agricultural products produced using organic practices to enhance programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service will use the information to evaluate the potential expansion of the Market Access Program to allow for more exports of organic agricultural products.

From April 2 – 20, NASS representatives will be conducting telephone and personal interviews of certified organic producers who have not yet responded by mail or telephone during the December 2011 – March 2012 data collection period.

Individual information is completely **CONFIDENTIAL** by law (Title 7, U.S. Code and CIPSEA, Public Law 107-347). "NASS safeguards the confidentiality of all survey responses and publishes only state and national level data, ensuring that no individual operation or producer can be identified," stated Kevin Pautler.

For more information on the 2011 USDA Certified Organic Production Survey, visit www.nass.usda.gov, or contact Mark Linstedt at 717-787-3904.

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